

Abstract of the Disclosure

A method of secure electronic couponing is disclosed which includes a main server system, and a client system interconnected by a distributed computer network, such as the Internet. Coupon data and advertising data are encrypted to thereby reduce the likelihood that such data may be misused, such as by unauthorized duplication. In addition, the client system is identified by a user identification that is allocated and associated with user information collected from the user of the client system. The user information is indicative of one or more demographic characteristics of the user without being sufficiently personal to specifically identify the user, thus preserving privacy. An icon is provided which, when flashing, alerts the user to the fact that new coupons are available.

R0070387